ROCHESTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

CODE ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENT
DIVISION OF BUILDING INSPECTION
CITY HALL
TELEPHONE: 603-332-3508
FAX: 603-332-8601

Bed Bug Fact Sheet

Background: Bed bugs *(Cimex lectularius)* are parasites that feed on humans. Before World War II, bed bug infestations were common. Since the 1940 and 50's, the widespread use of synthetic pesticides such as DDT greatly reduced their numbers. However, over the past decade, bed bugs are making a comeback across the United States. They are increasingly being encountered in homes, apartments, hotels, motels, dormitories, shelters and modes of transportation.

Identification: Bed bugs are brown to reddish-brown, oval-shaped, flattened insects that are about 1/4 to 5/8 inches long. Newly hatched nymphs are nearly colorless and become brown as they mature. Eggs are white and about 1/32 inch long. Bed bugs do not fly, but can move quickly across floors, walls and other surfaces.

Habits: Bed bugs primarily feed at night (nocturnal) when their host is asleep. It takes about 3-15 minutes for a bed bug to take a blood meal from a human. Once they finish, a hard, white, swollen welt may develop at the site of each bite. *Bed bugs are not known to transmit disease, however excessive scratching of the welts may lead to infection.*
Bed bugs hide during the day in dark protected places. They can be found in the seams and folds of mattresses as well as the bed frame. In heavier infestations they can be found in furniture, baseboards, door and window frames, floor cracks, electrical boxes and carpeting. Bed bugs also crawl up walls and can be found in pictures, wall hangings, curtains, and cracks in walls and ceilings.

Prevention: The best way to deal with bed bugs is to prevent them from entering your home. It is important to inspect clothing and baggage when returning from a trip and to inspect secondhand beds, furniture and clothing before purchasing.

Control Measures: Eliminating bed bugs from a dwelling can be challenging. The first step is to inspect a premise to locate bed bugs and their harborage sites. When done correctly, a combination of vacuuming, laundering bedding and clothing, and appropriate use of pesticides can be effective in eliminating bed bugs. Sometimes it is best to get the assistance of a licensed pest control operator to help identify and eliminate bed bugs.

Information: For more information, please contact the Rochester Health Department at 332-3508

Source: The Ohio State University Extension